

# SUMMER FESTIVAL GUIDE

COMPILED BY *LIVELY TIMES*

Montana is awash in music this summer. Here's our guide to Big Sky Country's summer music festivals, courtesy of *Lively Times* ([livelytimes.com](http://livelytimes.com)):

## Billings & Eastern Montana

### Last Best Country Fest: July 10-11

at South Park in Billings. Kick back with friends and family for a rollicking summer weekend of country music – modern, traditional and alternative. Big and Rich headlines Friday's show, and Hank Williams Jr., a five-time Entertainer of the Year, headlines Saturday's show (406-534-0400 or [www.lastbestcountryfest.com](http://www.lastbestcountryfest.com)).



Last Best Country Fest: Big and Rich

**Magic City Blues Festival:** July 30-Aug. 2 on Montana Avenue and at South Park in Billings. Montana's urban music festival opens Thursday with Billings native Guthrie Brown and his band, the Family Tree, playing a free show at St. John's Lutheran Home. Blues great Buddy Guy headlines Friday's show on Montana Avenue; Kelley Hunt and The Congress open. John Fogerty headlines the Saturday show at South Park; O.A.R. and Guthrie Brown and the Family Tree open. Sultry songstress Lucinda Williams takes the limelight for Sunday's show at South Park, which also features Edward David Anderson and Los Lobos (406-534-0400 or [www.magiccityblues.com](http://www.magiccityblues.com)).

**Festival of Nations:** July 31-Aug. 1 at Lions Park in Red Lodge. The festival begins Friday and continues through Saturday with a variety music and cultural activities and performances (406-446-1718 or [www.redlodgefestivalofnations.com](http://www.redlodgefestivalofnations.com)).

**Big Sky Polkafest:** Sept. 4-6 at the Moose Club Lodge in Billings. Matt Hodek and the Dakota Dutchmen, Barefoot Beckey and The Ivanhoe Dutchmen, and the Just for Fun Band supply the musical fuel for this 22nd annual polka gathering (406-855-9806 or [bigskypolkaclub.com](http://bigskypolkaclub.com)).

**Miles City Bluegrass Festival:** Sept. 18-20 at the Eastern Montana Fairgrounds in Miles City. This year's roster includes High Plains Tradition, Greg Blake and Mountain Soul, The Woodpicks, Cold Heart, Song Dog Serenade, and Cotton Wood (406-234-2480 or [www.milescitywebsites.com/bluegrass](http://www.milescitywebsites.com/bluegrass)).

## Bozeman, Livingston & Big Sky

### Montana Chamber Music Society

**Festival:** July 8 at MSU Reynolds Recital Hall in Bozeman. Members of the renowned Muir String Quartet and acclaimed guest artists perform the Brahms Horn Trio, Chris Brubeck's new Clarinet Quintet and the Dohnanyi Piano Quintet during the Bozeman concert (406-551-4700 or [www.montanachambermusicsociety.org](http://www.montanachambermusicsociety.org)). The festival also includes Strings Under the Big Sky, July 10 at Rainbow Ranch in Big Sky (406-284-2677), and a performance at St. Timothy's Chapel above Georgetown Lake, July 12 (888-407-4071).

**Moods of the Madison Music Fest:** July 17-18 at the North 40 in Ennis. The line-up includes bluegrass all-stars Leftover Salmon, 90s' throwback Collective Soul, Los Lonely Boys, Beats Antique, Nahko and Medicine for the People, RJD2, Dopapod, Seryn, Red Wanting Blue, Cure for the Common, and Satsang (406-579-2535 or [www.moodsofthemadison.com](http://www.moodsofthemadison.com)).

**Summerfest Along the Yellowstone:** July 17-18 at Miles Park in Livingston. Along with a slew of regional performers, headliners include Jim Lauderdale, Holly Williams, and the Will Kimbrough Band (406-222-8155 or [livsummerfest.com](http://livsummerfest.com)).

**Big Sky Classical Music Festival:** Aug. 7-9 in Big Sky. The fifth annual festival opens Friday in Town Center Park with Windsync; Saturday, acclaimed violinists Angella Ahn and Rachel Barton Pine join violists David Wallace and Gillian Gallagher, and cellists Matt Haimovitz and Kathe Jarka at the Warren Miller Performing Arts Center. The festival culminates Sunday at the park, where the Big Sky Festival Orchestra performs (995-2742 or [bigskyarts.org](http://bigskyarts.org)).

### Rockin' the Rivers:

Aug. 7-9 at The Bridge in the Jefferson River Canyon near Three Forks. Rock out to Dee Snider, Quiet Riot, Jack Russell's Great White, Autograph, Black 'n Blue, Blue Tattoo, Theory of a Deadman, Skid Row, Puddle of Mud, Saliva, War, Chuck Negron, and other great acts (406-866-285-0097 or [www.rockintherivers.com](http://www.rockintherivers.com)).

**Livingston Hoot:** Aug. 13 in downtown Livingston. Performers include The Fossils, The Tin Men and headliner Roy Rogers and the Delta Rhythm Kings, with special guest Philip Aaberg on piano (406-599-1075 or [livingstonhoot.com](http://livingstonhoot.com)).

**Sweet Pea Festival:** Aug. 7-9 at Lindley Park in Bozeman. A costume ball, parade and the Bite of Bozeman lead up to the giant arts festival, overflowing with music, dance, theatre and children's activities (406-586-4003 or [www.sweetpeafestival.org](http://www.sweetpeafestival.org)).

## Butte & Southwest Montana

### St. Timothy's Summer Music Festival:

4 p.m. Sundays, June 28, July 12 and 26, and Aug. 9 and 23 at St. Timothy's Chapel, high above Georgetown Lake. The annual summer



St. Timothy's Summer Music Festival: Dolce Canto with Monroe Crossing in "The World Beloved" (also in Missoula)

music series in a spectacular setting begins June 28 with a concert by the **Luca Rodoni Jazz Ensemble**, featuring the 18-year-old trumpeter from Bozeman with pianist Bob Nell and Bozeman guitarist and acoustic bassist Craig Hall. Next up is the **Montana Chamber Society with Muir Quartet Members and Guests** on July 12; Monroe Crossing and Missoula's Dolce Canto in "The World Beloved: A Bluegrass Mass," July 26; the **Canam Piano Duo**, featuring Karen Beers and Christopher Hahn, Aug. 9; and the Drum Brothers Aug. 23 (888-407-4071 or [www.sttimothysmusic.org](http://www.sttimothysmusic.org)).

**Montana Folk Festival:** July 10-12 in Uptown Butte. One of the Northwest's largest free outdoor festivals features performances and demonstrations by 25 artists and groups on seven stages. A sampling of this year's line-up: The Campbell Brothers, sacred steel; Dale Ann Bradley, bluegrass; Preston Shannon Band, blues; Savoy Family Cajun Band; Cambalache, son jaracho music; Martin Hayes and Dennis Cahill, Irish fiddle and guitar; and Khmer Arts Academy, Cambodian ballet (406-497-6464 or [www.montanafolkfestival.com](http://www.montanafolkfestival.com)).

**Art in Washoe Park:** July 17-19 at Washoe Park in Anaconda. The Copper Village Museum and Art Center's 36th annual event features 83 juried art and craft booths and 17

food vendors. The lively menu of music includes Mike Bader and the John Andrews Band on Friday; Ken Rich, Heather Lingle and Hot Rod Deluxe Saturday; and The Workers Sunday (406-563-2422 or [coppervillageartcenter.com](http://coppervillageartcenter.com)).

### An Ri Ra Montana Irish Festival:

Aug. 14-16 at the Original Mine Yard in Butte. The festival celebrates Irish culture and heritage with music, dance, workshops, lectures, documentaries and children's activities. This year's headliners include the Cathie Ryan Band, Ken O'Malley and The Ne'er Duwels, Runa, The Town Pants, the Trinity Irish Dancers and local faves, Dublin Gulch (406-498-3983 or [www.mtgaelic.org](http://www.mtgaelic.org)).

**Original Festival:** Sept. 11-12 at the Original Mine Yard in Butte. The two-day event offers a wide variety of music, performing artists, and vendors. Headliners include: Dispatch's Chad Stokes, Skism, Sage Francis, Supaman, Trollphace, The Weekenders, SunSquabi, Kill Them With Colour, Lazerdisk, Crnkn, and Modern Measure (406-498-3549 or [original-festival.com](http://original-festival.com)).

## Central Montana

### Red Ants Pants Music Festival:

July 23-26 at the Jackson Ranch in White Sulphur Springs. A powerhouse line-up joins headliners Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, Ryan Bingham and Keb' Mo' at the Red Ants Pants Foundation's fifth annual event. The popular festival kicks off Thursday night with a downtown street dance featuring the Bus Driver Tour. Action moves to the festival grounds Friday for a plethora of music, including country icon Lee Ann Womack, the Turnpike Troubadours, Bruce Robison and Kelly Willis, singer/songwriter Holly Williams, roots trio Red Molly, Lucero, Parsonsfield, the Shook Twins, Del Barber, the Lil' Smokies, and the Easy Leaves. More than a dozen regional bands perform on the Side Stage (406-698-3150 or [www.redantspantsmusicfestival.com](http://www.redantspantsmusicfestival.com)).

**Montana Cowboy Poetry Gathering and Western Music Rendezvous:** Aug. 13-16 at the Yogo Inn and Fergus Center for the Performing Arts in Lewistown. Texas

Poet Laureate Red Steagall headlines the 30th annual event, performing with nationally acclaimed entertainer Dave Stamey Saturday night. In addition to cowboy poetry and western music sessions, the event includes a Western Art and Gear Show, Collectible Book Sale, Jam 'n Dance and Cowboy Church (800-860-9646 or [www.montanacowboypoetrygathering.com](http://www.montanacowboypoetrygathering.com)).

**Boulder Music and Art Festival:** Sept. 12-13 at Veterans' Park in Boulder. A mix of musicians entertains while local artists display their works. This year's line-up includes the Big Sky Mudflaps, Western Union Swing Band, Anything Goes, Brigid Reedy, Longhorn, Prairie Smoke, the Junk Man's Choir and the Little Boulder Band (406-465-7282 or [bouldermtchamber.org](http://bouldermtchamber.org)).

## Flathead & Mission Valleys

**River Jam! Music Festival 2015:** July 17-19 at the Yaak River Tavern in Troy. Head to the wild Yaak and get an earful of music by T. Scot Wilburn and The Shut Up -n- Playboys, Ten Skip Stone, the Dodgy Mountain Men, Jameson and the Sordid Seeds, Moonshine Mountain, Traff the Wiz, Alan Lane, Jesse Haag, and many more (295-4706 or [riverjamfestival.com](http://riverjamfestival.com)).



Red Ants Pants and Summerfest on the Yellowstone: Holly Williams



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## For blues

## Hounds:

## The Northern Rockies

## Blues Trail

The Northern Rockies Blues Trail brings seven blues events to the west side of the Rockies this summer, beginning and ending with Flathead Valley Blues Society Blues Cruises on Flathead Lake July 3 and Aug. 22.

From July 10-Aug. 15, communities in north Idaho and northwestern Montana are rockin' with blues festivals that boast unique settings, a broad variety of blues styles, food vendors, and opportunities for lodging and camping nearby. Blues hounds can head for:

- The Historic Wallace Blues Festival, Wallace, Idaho, July 10-12 ([wallace-id.com/bluesfest2015.html](http://wallace-id.com/bluesfest2015.html))

- Symes Hot Springs Blues Festival, Hot Springs, July 24-25 ([symeshotsprings.com](http://symeshotsprings.com)).

- Big Sky Rhythm and Blues Festival, Noxon, July 31-Aug. 2: ([bigskyblues.com](http://bigskyblues.com)).

- Riverfront Blues Festival, Libby, Aug. 7-8 ([www.riverfrontbluesfestival.com](http://www.riverfrontbluesfestival.com)).

- Flathead Lake Blues Festival, Polson, Aug. 14-15 ([www.flatheadlakebluesfestival.com](http://www.flatheadlakebluesfestival.com)).

Learn more at [www.NorthernRockiesBluesTrail.org](http://www.NorthernRockiesBluesTrail.org) or Like the trail on Facebook to keep up with the news.

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